
Regional Council Activity Report

March 9, 1998

Briefing to Member Agencies from Executive Director, James M. Bourey



Executive Director's Report

It is my pleasure to send to all of the elected officials the first issue of the Regional Council Activity Report. The inspiration for this report came from Regional Council members at the retreat held in January of this year. It is my hope that this report will provide a summary of the activities of MAG following every Regional Council meeting. Our communication to all of the elected officials is vital to insure that you are aware of the activities of your regional organization. I would welcome any comments on how we can improve this communication.

HB 2564 Regional Transportation Alert

Before reviewing the items discussed at the February 25, 1998 Regional Council meeting, I would like bring to your attention, a serious matter regarding the freeway decision-making at MAG. HB 2564 Regional Transportation Administration would remove freeway decision-making for the sales tax funded freeway program from MAG and give it to a seven-member board appointed by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors. On March 5, 1998, this bill passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 38 yes, 20 no and 1 not voting. This bill is now heading for the Senate and we need the assistance of all MAG member agencies in defeating this bill. For your information, we are attaching information regarding HB 2564. It is ironic that we recently received a very positive performance audit conducted for the Arizona Auditor General by David M. Griffith & Associates, LTD. Another irony is that \$28 million annually of MAG federal dollars is put in the freeway program, yet some in the Legislature would like to have the decisions on freeway planning made by another agency that contributes nothing to the freeway program. **We really need all of you to help defeat HB 2564 as it moves to the Senate.**

Now, for the purpose of the report, to review the actions taken at the February Regional Council meeting and the upcoming issues for future meetings.



Regional Council Meeting Report

Annual Report on the Regional Freeway System

The Annual Report on the Maricopa Association of Governments Regional Freeway Program reviews the fiscal status of the MAG Regional Freeway Program, reports on progress made over the past year, and identifies major issues or concerns that could impact the Program. MAG has prepared the Annual Report since 1992 in response to the 1991 Performance Audit of the MAG Regional Freeway System. The 1998 audit of the Regional Freeway Program found that "program controls are in place and are functioning as intended to ensure that the Regional Freeway System will be completed on time and within budget." The system has been in fiscal balance since 1992, with no project delays and with limited accelerations this year.

For more information, contact Eric Anderson, Freeway Program Manager, 470-1107

Air Quality Strategies Task Force

In November 1997, Governor Jane Dee Hull established the Governor's Air Quality Strategies Task Force. The final report was completed on February 17, 1998. Several measures will require legislative action. Others can be considered at the local level. A key local measure is the control of fugitive dust at a variety of sources, including construction sites. The Governor's Air Quality Task Force is recommending that Maricopa County hire five additional inspectors to assist in enforcing Rule 310 which covers fugitive dust sources on a regionwide basis. The Environmental Protection Agency announced to the Governor's Air Quality Strategies Task Force that hiring the additional inspectors could remove the final Moderate Area PM-10 Federal Implementation Plan from being enacted on the local governments in the nonattainment area.

In addition to Rule 310, the draft recommendations include: Upgrades to the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program; Cleaner Burning Fuels; Implementation of the California Low Emission Vehicle Program in Arizona; Voluntary Vehicle Repair, Retrofit, and Recycle Program; Ban on Leaf Blowers; and Plans to Stabilize Targeted Unpaved Roads and Unpaved Shoulders.

The Regional Council recommended that the Governor and Legislature consider supporting the recommendations of the Governor's Air Quality Strategies Task Force and urge Maricopa County to establish funding to

hire the inspectors needed for enforcement of Maricopa County Rule 310 to control fugitive dust at a variety of sources, including construction sites, by March 20, 1998.

For more information, contact Lindy Bauer, Environmental Manager, 254-6300



Upcoming Issues

Serious Area PM-10 Plan Most Stringent Control Measures

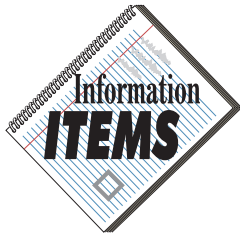
On October 29, 1997, the Regional Council took action to direct staff to prepare a request for up to a five-year extension of the PM-10 attainment date, since it appeared that attainment by December 31, 2001 was impracticable. The extension request would be included in the Serious Area Particulate Plan for PM-10 for submittal following action by the Legislature. For the Serious Area PM-10 Plan, it is required that the plan include the most stringent measures in State plans, or in practice in any other state. These measures also need to be feasible for this area. Some of the measures also identified in the Governor's Air Quality Strategies Task Force Report are Oxidizing Catalysts on Chain-Driven Charbroilers, PM-10 Efficient Street Sweepers after January 1, 1999, and CARB Diesel Fuel.

For more information, contact Lindy Bauer, Environmental Manager, 254-63

Carbon Monoxide Plan Measures

Initial modeling by MAG staff for the Serious Area Carbon Monoxide (CO) Plan indicated that the CO standard would be achieved by the required date of December 31, 2000 with committed control measures. However, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has been evaluating the EPA model which is used for developing CO Plan credits for I/M 240. It appears that additional CO Plan measures will be needed to show attainment for this plan. Preliminary MAG modeling of alternative credit packages for IM/240 for various testing protocol shows that an emission reduction of 4.4% would be required to attain the standard by the year 2000. This is in addition to the I/M 240 program and the control measure commitments that have already been received.

For more information, contact Lindy Bauer, Environmental Manager, 254-6300



Information Items

ISTEA Reauthorization

ISTEA expired on September 30, 1997. To maintain the flow of federal dollars, Congress extended the existing version of the bill until May 1, 1998 last year. A multi-year reauthorization is critical in the very near future to keep federal transportation dollars flowing to states and localities.

The issue of the most contention has been funding. Transportation leaders in Congress want to increase transportation funding levels and the budget leaders want to maintain the integrity of the balanced budget agreement reached last year. The Senate has now reached a compromise on funding which will provide an additional \$26 billion for ISTEA funding over the next five years, bringing the total authorization up to \$171 billion from the \$145 billion authorized in the original version of ISTEA. This increased funding will not affect the balanced budget agreement reached last year. From all appearances, the funding debate may be resolved, at least in the Senate.

The reauthorization of ISTEA is currently being considered on the Senate floor. The debate began last week, and while it is likely to take several days, a reauthorization may be passed in the Senate by the end of this week. There is currently no definitive word from the House on whether this funding level meets their needs. The House is looking for even more money to include in the legislation.

For more information, contact John Farry, Transportation Planning Program Manager, 254-6300

Annual Unified Planning Work Program

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is prepared annually by the Maricopa Association of Governments to describe the regional planning activities that will be conducted during the coming year, and identifies the mission, goals, accomplishments, objectives, outcome measures, and budgets of projects that MAG will pursue. MAG is currently drafting its Fiscal Year 1999 UPWP. It is anticipated that the UPWP will be presented to the Management Committee and Regional Council in May, 1998.

For more information, contact Dennis Smith, Assistant Director, 254-6300

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments require that the MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and transportation plans be in conformance with the applicable air quality plans. The TIP serves as a five-year regional guide for the preservation, management and expansion of public services, including highways, ridesharing, transit facilities and various congestion mitigation and air quality improvement projects. Projects in the TIP are from local, state and federal sources. The addendum to the MAG LRTP includes priority changes to the ADOT Life Cycle Program and Long Range Plan for Freeways, extending the time horizon to 2018, and incorporating changes from the TIP and to the Long Range Street Plan as submitted by member agencies. Approval to perform an air quality conformity analysis for the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program will be brought to the Management Committee and Regional Council for approval this month. The full plan will likely be brought forward for approval in July.

For more information, contact Terry Johnson, Transportation Manager, 254-6300



Upcoming Events

Annual Awards Evening

The first annual Maricopa Association of Governments Awards Evening will be held in conjunction with the Regional Council Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 24, 1998. The awards, focusing on a commitment to the spirit of regionalism, include awards for Regional Excellence, member agency Regional Partnership, Public-Private Partnership, and Distinguished Service Awards.

For more information, contact Rita Walton, Policy and Information Manager, 254-6300

Next Regional Council Meeting

The next Regional Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 25, 1998. The main topics on the agenda are expected to include Conformity Analysis of the Draft FY 1998-2002 Transportation Improvement Program and the Long Range Transportation Plan: Draft 1998 Addendum Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee Update Homeless Plan Update

For more information, contact James M. Bourey, Executive Director, 254-6308